



For Immediate Release
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NEWS RELEASE



For Additional Information
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Money Available to Ranchers for On-The-Ground Livestock Operation Improvements on BLM

Las Cruces- Approximately \$1.5 million is being made available to federal ranching permittees in New Mexico.

The main Bureau of Land Management (BLM) emphasis areas will be in the Upper Gila/Mangus Watershed, in BLM's Las Cruces and Socorro Offices, totaling \$750,000.

The money comes from the Natural Resource Conservation Service's (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) which is managed by the NRCS State Office. The program has two major goals: enhancing agricultural production while optimizing environmental benefits.

An applicant must meet several criteria to be considered for the program. These include:

- The land is under private control for the contract period and included in the participants operating unit.
- Installation of conservation practices will contribute to an improvement in the identified natural resource concern(s).
- The conservation practices will directly benefit agricultural land owned by the participant.
- The participant has written authorization from the Government landowner to apply the conservation practice(s).

Applicants who already have an approved Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP), or who agree to develop a CRMP will receive first consideration for funding. All 2006 application evaluations (sign-ups) are due to the NRCS office, located in the USDA Service Center in your county, by January 27, 2006. Applicants are strongly encouraged to sign-up as soon as possible. Submitting an application does not obligate an individual to sign a contract.

This effort began in 2005, and was very well received by ranchers holding Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or Forest Service allotments.

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www.nm.blm.gov

For more information about BLM's joint participation in EQIP, contact Rich LaCasse or Lane Hauser at 505.525.4300 for the Las Cruces District, or Mark Matthews in the Socorro Field Office at 505.835.0412.

You may also find out more about the EQIP program from the Hidalgo County NRCS Field Office at 505.542.9141, the Grant County NRCS Field Office at 505.388.1569, the Luna County NRCS Field Office at 505.546.9291, or the Sierra County NRCS Field Office in Socorro at 505.835.1710.

Online information is available at the Natural Resource Conservation Service's website. Log on to their site at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmbill/2002/>.

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